

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

May 11, 2009

CALL TO ORDER:

Kathleen Eriksen, Chairperson called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Members Present: Kathleen Eriksen Doug Sofia
Heather Lane-Fowler Laurie Sullivan
Jan Hatch Kurt Thornton
Susan Baldwin (Commission Liaison)

Staff Present: Glenn Perian, Senior Planner, Planning & Community Development
Brad Misner, Planning Supervisor
Leona Parrish, Administrative Assistant, Planning

ADDITIONS / DELETIONS TO AGENDA: None

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES: Correction was noted by Ms. Jan Hatch; Page 4 Motion made for 161 Oaklawn Ave. stated: supported by Jan (*Acker*), should have read: Jan **Hatch**.

MOTION WAS MADE BY MR. KURT THORNTON TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM MARCH 9, 2009 MEETING WITH THE NOTED CORRECTION ON PAGE 4; SECONDED BY MS. JAN HATCH, ALL IN FAVOR MINUTES APPROVED WITH CORRECTION NOTED.

CORRESPONDENCE: Noted for the record an email sent to the Historic District Commission by Mr. Kurt Thornton with attachment of photos of Downtown Battle Creek.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

70 W. Michigan Avenue

Mr. Andy Wenzel was present and asked to be 2nd on the agenda in order to have associates arrive and speak regarding their application.

Commission agreed to proceed to next item on the agenda and return to this item.

72 Walter Avenue: Mr. Glenn Perian read the report stating this was an application requesting approval of a new fence that has already installed and will be painting it white. He said it does meet the Secretary of Interior's Standards # 2, 3, 9, & 10; and recommends commission approval.

Ms. Heather Lane-Fowler asked if once the HDC approves, would a building permit then be approved. Mr. Perian stated, yes.

Ms. Laurie Sullivan asked if there was a penalty fee included with the permit fee for installing the fence without a permit. Mr. Perian stated the petitioner pulled the fence permit after she was informed one was required.

Ms. Farby Burton, property owner showed a receipt where she paid for a fence permit, once she knew one was required.

MOTION: MADE BY MR. DOUG SOFIA TO APPROVE THE REQUEST FOR A FENCE LOCATED AT 72 WALTER AVENUE AS SUBMITTED; SUPPORTED BY MR. KURT THORNTON.

ALL IN FAVOR, NONE OPPOSED MOTION PASSED TO APPROVE.

70 W. Michigan Avenue

Glenn Perian stated this petitioner is proposing a roof top deck including a 48" safety railing for the residential tenants at 70 W. Michigan Ave. Stated the deck will be constructed of a treated wood composite material and the guard rail will be a 48" aluminum railing system. The deck will be constructed above the 7th floor on the roof deck and will be for the enjoyment of the residential tenants. Based on the work plan, the proposed work does not appear as though it will impact the historical or architectural value and significance of the resource and its relationship to the historic value of the surrounding area. Mr. Perian stated that it meets #'s 3, 4, & 9 of the Interior Standards.

Mr. Andy Wenzel, Ms. Tracy VanDyke and Mr. Dan Paul were present on behalf of property owner. Mr. Paul provided a mock-up example of what it would appear to look like (provided photo copies).

Ms. Kathleen Eriksen spoke on behalf of the Downtown Partnership stating this concept has been successful in other areas and would provide a nice place to go for the residents.

Ms. Heather Lane-Fowler asked if they would remove the trim. Mr. Paul stated, yes they plan to wrap trim with metal (provided photo examples).

Ms. Laurie Sullivan asked if they had a sketch of what the appearance would be when completed. Mr. Paul stated, yes it was the same as what is included in the report.

Ms. Heather Lane-Fowler asked how many residents were in the building and if it would be too hot for them. Mr. Paul stated there were 21 residents and it would be accessible to all of them. Said it would be 80 ft high so it should not be too hot as it should be breezy.

Ms. Laurie Sullivan asked if the original trim could be retained. Mr. Andy Wenzel stated if it were possible they would not go to the expense of replacing; that there was a structural need to replace.

MOTION: MADE BY MR. KURT THORNTON TO APPROVE THE APPLICATION AS IT MEETS THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS # 3, 4, & 9 FOR THE ROOF TOP DECK AND RAILING FOR PROPERTY LOCATED AT 70 W. MICHIGAN AVENUE; SUPPORTED BY MR. DOUG SOFIA.

ALL IN FAVOR, NONE OPPOSED MOTION PASSED TO APPROVE.

PRESENTATION: Mr. Karl Dehn, President & CEO, Battle Creek Unlimited

Mr. Dehn stated in November 2008, they announced a major downtown investment, also a 35 million dollar new construction by Kellogg Co. which since has been placed on hold.

Mr. Dehn provided a power point presentation regarding the proposed Downtown Improvements and future growth of Battle Creek, it was outlined as follows:

- Noted community opportunities
- Opportunities available for Battle Creek (unusual alignment of the stars)
- Education important role
- Improve infrastructure needed to be done
- Noted new vision for Battle Creek Downtown and changes needed
- Target neighborhoods surrounding downtown area to rid blight with stimulus dollars
- Look at structures for stability and/or Historic Preservation options
- New vision to make more attractive, welcoming in the downtown district for gathering by enhancing M-66 gateway; streetscape, walkways with a new park and open space that is centrally located for festivals and events
- Have engaged different companies
- Provided conceptual photos of new vision for Battle Creek gateway for 2010
- Timeline depends on land accusation by the City of Battle Creek
- Rice's Shoes will remain downtown
- Noted energy crises has initiated more people wanting to live nearer to where they work
- Kellogg Company consolidation will improve business downtown (54 million investment Oct. 2009)
- National Center Food Inspection to be downtown hopefully and will employ 50-60 people; will know by this summer. Inspectors will be trained at this location
- A.F.D.O Goal is for safe nutritious food supply
- July 2009 will be the first training in downtown Battle Creek at the Kendall Center or McCamly Hotel
- Improve education in Battle Creek for the Community to be successful by expanding the Math & Science Center in downtown
- Combine the Y-Center and Parks & Recreation to Full Blast by 2011-2012.

Mr. Kurt Thornton asked how we could get Heritage Tower to be improved. He would not want this building to be demolished because of neglect.

Mr. Karl Dehn stated the owner was to sell on land contract but the deal was not completed.

Commissioner Baldwin stated regarding the violations; the City needs to be invited inside to get the code issues resolved as they can only assess issues from the street view.

Mr. Thornton said he is not in favor of tearing down buildings on the corner of Michigan and McCamly as we are limited to the buildings that are left. He suggested the Cereal City parking lot location, which is near the river etc.; said it would be a feasible park only two blocks away instead.

Mr. Karl Dehn stated a lot of thought went into this location and if it were farther out it would not be used as much. Being centrally located it would work best with the riverfront etc. Said buildings have been vacant and have issues which are getting worse and difficult to get investors.

Ms. Sullivan asked if this location has been set in stone. Mr. Dehn stated this location, they believe, would be most successful for downtown.

Ms. Sullivan stated you would think that people wanting to go to a park would walk to a community park area with a river-view etc.

Mr. Dehn stated a central park would be best as it would support the downtown and not take them out away from the downtown area.

Ms. Eriksen stated they plan to relocate the Farmers Market along the river.

Mr. Thornton stated the Festival Park never worked and moving one block away might not work also.

Commissioner Susan Baldwin stated she does support this corner and feels it would be a good location to residents living in the Tower. Said several buildings are there that need redone and it is a potential to bring people out at lunch time etc.

Mr. Thornton stated the Kellogg Co. has cafeterias and employees do not go outside as it is convenient to have a cafeteria inside. Said no one has the money to renovate down-town buildings he wished they could as once they are demolished and gone you cannot get them back.

Ms. Sullivan stated she went to the Parks & Recreation meeting and you can see growth by the numbers and types of Parks done, said after a full circle they are gone and it is too late.

Mr. Thornton stated an example was Bijou Theatre it is gone and now would bring people to downtown. Noted that the property involved; the owner has been renovating for years.

Ms. Heather Lane-Fowler asked if they needed all four of the buildings. Mr. Dehn stated that four have been identified, but they are not at the design stage. Said he will keep the HDC informed.

Ms. Lane-Fowler asked what will happen to the Y-Center building once it is vacated. Mr. Dehn stated it is now being evaluated and that the Multi-Complex Center Building has a long-term use; he is not sure regarding the main building.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None

COMMENTS FROM COMMISSION MEMBERS AND STAFF:

Ms. Laurie Sullivan asked regarding her property located at 130 Frelinghuysen Ave.; would she be required to submit an application for approval if she replaced her front entrance door. Mr. Glenn Perian stated, yes an application would be required as it changes the front appearance of her home.

Ms. Jan Hatch noted regarding the proposed downtown park, that it could become a hangout for kids.

Mr. Glenn Perian noted that Mr. Kim Tuck, Building Superintendent retired and will no longer be attending their meetings, said he will see if someone from the Inspections Department would attend in his place for future Historic District Commission meetings.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion made by Ms. Kathleen Eriksen to adjourn this meeting; all in favor none opposed.

Meeting was adjourned at 5:22 p.m.

Submitted by: Leona A. Parrish, Administrative Assistant, Planning Department